

**Notice of Allowability****Application No.**

10/509,691

**Applicant(s)**

VAN WINKLE ET AL.

**Examiner**

VINOD KUMAR

**Art Unit**

1638

**-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--**

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to 03/12/2008, 5/2/2008 & Interview of 5/12/2008.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 3 and 17-19.
3. ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).  
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some\* c) ☐ None of the:  
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.  
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.  
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* Certified copies not received: \_\_\_\_\_.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.  
**THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.**

4. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
5. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.  
(a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached  
1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_.  
(b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_.  
**Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).**
6. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

**Attachment(s)**

1. ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. ☐ Notice of Draftperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. ☐ Information Disclosure Statements (PTO/SB/08),  
Paper No./Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_
4. ☐ Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit of Biological Material
5. ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
6. ☒ Interview Summary (PTO-413),  
Paper No./Mail Date SAME.
7. ☒ Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. ☐ Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_.

### EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

1. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it **MUST** be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Karri Bradley (Reg. No. 56,300) on May 13, 2008.

In the claims:

Claim 3 (amended) A method of producing increased drought tolerance in a plant, said method comprising:

a) introducing into plant cells a plant transformation vector comprising a heterologous constitutive promoter operatively linked to a nucleotide sequence that encodes a DRO2 polypeptide comprising an amino acid sequence having at least 95% sequence identity to the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:2 to produce transformed cells overexpressing the DRO2 polypeptide, wherein overexpression of the DRO2 polypeptide [is involved with] confers drought tolerance to said plant cells;

b) growing the transformed cells to produce a transgenic plant[, wherein said heterologous constitutive promoter provides overexpression of a DRO2 transcript,] and

c) identifying said transgenic plant with increased drought tolerance by measuring relative water content of [said] the transgenic plant in comparison to an untransformed plant, whereby the drought tolerant transgenic plant has a higher water content than said untransformed plant.

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Claim 18 (amended) The method of claim 3, further comprising subjecting the plant to water deprivation prior to identifying said transgenic plant with increased drought tolerance [by measuring relative water content of said transgenic plant].

Applicant authorized amendment to claims 3 and 18 to obviate potential issues under 35 U.S.C. 112, 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraphs.

### ***Conclusions***

2. Claims 3 and 17-19 are allowed.

### ***Contact Information***

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to VINOD KUMAR whose telephone number is (571)272-4445. The examiner can normally be reached on 8.30 a.m. to 5.00 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Anne Marie Grunberg can be reached on (571) 272-0975. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Phuong T. Bui/  
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 1638